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FY68 Budget Request Seeks $75.3 Billion for Defense

More than half the new obligational authority President Johnson has requested of Congress for the FY 68 budget will go to the Defense Department.

In his Jan. 24 Budget Message to Congress, the President asked $75.3 billion for Defense Department spending.

The Chief Executive pointed out the total budget, including full costs of the Vietnam Conflict, will account for only 1½ percent more of our gross national product than it did three years ago.

He broke down the principal increases as $5.8 billion for Vietnam and other national defense outlays and $6.2 billion in benefits under the federal government's social security and other trust funds.

Continue Nike-X Development

Turning to national defense, President Johnson said the U.S. would continue intensive development of Nike-X but would take no deployment action until discussions are initiated with the Soviet Union to limit Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) deployment.

Defense officials, in spelling out the ABM decision, said the funding considered is in the neighborhood of $4 to $5 billion, not the $40 billion so often projected by news media. They also said any initial deployment would be a point-to-point defense system.

The President also singled out initial procurement of the advance Poseidon submarine-launched missile as one of the FY68 budget highlights.

Defense officials said the FY68 Poseidon program totals $1.1 billion, including monies for the missiles, converting Polaris submarines, construction, and program development and engineering funding.

Mr. Johnson stressed that a supplemental FY67 military budget ($12.9 billion in new obligation authority) was requested because it was difficult earlier to determine requirements a full 18 months in advance. But he said the FY68 military budget will be adequate for the entire year including critical long-lead items until FY69 funds are provided.

Elaborating on this point, Defense officials said the FY68 military budget was requested on the assumption that combat operations will continue indefinitely.

SAFETY AWARD—Gen. Charles H. Bonesteel III (left), CG, U.S. 8th Army, accepts the National Safety Council's "Award of Honor" for fiscal year 1966 from Gen. Dwight E. Beach, commander-in-chief, U.S. Army Pacific. Award honored the high standards of 8th Army's safety program, reductions in number of injuries and fatalities and resultant savings in accident costs.

DOD Calls Off Deferment Of 550 Construction Projects

Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara has rescinded a 1965 order deferring award of contracts for more than 550 military construction projects, including 8,250 family housing units.

The projects, totaling $564 million, are at 285 installations in 42 states, the District of Columbia and 16 locations outside the United States.

Forty-one stateside and overseas installations will receive family housing, totaling $153 million.

Other projects include officer and enlisted living quarters, medical and dental facilities, recreational buildings, and administrative and operational facilities.

The Defense Department announcement said: "Today's action by the Secretary followed a decision that this action at this time will have a beneficial effect upon morale in the Armed Forces, satisfy valid construction and housing requirements, and have a salutary effect on the construction industry."

Funds for the 550 projects were authorized in FY66 and previous years.

Washington Memos

CONTINENTAL AIR COMMAND Vice Commander Maj. Gen. J. S. Holtoner retires from the Air Force Jan. 31 after 34-year career. Gen Holtoner, responsible for the shaping of the Air Force reserve program, arrived at CAC headquarters, Robins AFB, in July 1965 after a two-year tour as Commandant, Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Va.

F-111 SWINGING WING fighter aircraft loaned to NASA in late January so that space agency can run studies and tests ranging from stability and control to inlet-engine integration. NASA also wants to check out theoretical wind tunnel studies made earlier.

FORMER CHIEF OF NAVAL Operations, Adm. Arliegh A. Burke, has accepted chairmanship of 1967 Freedoms Roll Call, filling vacancy created by death of Walt Disney, according to Dr. Kenneth D. Wells, president of Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, Pa. Adm. Burke said he would complete Disney's assignment for this year's annual two week national educational campaign Feb. 15-28.

FIRST LOGISTICAL COMMAND units in Saigon have begun a move to Long Binh. Log's 44th Medical Brigade has sent four of its units, joining the 507th Engineer Detachment (Utilities) and 537th Personnel Services Company.

AIR FORCE MAJOR who downed first MIG-21 fighter over North Vietnam has received Silver Star. Maj. Paul J. Gilmore was credited with "complete disregard for personal safety" in downing leader of two attacking MIGs, while major was leading flight of two tactical jet fighters on escort mission.

DIVISION SAFETY AWARDS for FY66 will go to Army's 1st and 4th Infantry Divisions. Selections are based on ability to maintain superior safety performance, show reductions in accidents, injuries, and costs, and demonstrate quantitative improvements in safety programs.

USAF WO BOARD to convene April 24 to select regular and reserve warrant officers for permanent promotion to chief warrant officer grades W-3 and W-4. Eligibles are W-2s and W-3s not previously selected, with date of rank or promotion service date on or before June 30, 1962.

OFFICE OF NAVAL RESEARCH plans to recommend fleet adoption of new shark repellent device, a five-foot long plastic bag that surrounds a man in water. Developed by Dr. C. Scott Johnson, Naval Ordnance Test Station's Marine Biology Facility, Point Mugu, Calif., device was tested by American Institute of Biological Science's Shark Research Panel.

FIRST JET-POWERED, high-endurance Coast Guard cutter, Hamilton, will be honored with a special postal cachet when it is placed into service in mid-February. Hamilton will be largest vessel built in U.S. with combination diesel and gas turbine engines and is first major ship constructed for Coast Guard in more than 20 years. Ship will be used as a floating observatory, oceanographic laboratory and air navigation facility.

A $1.4 MILLION letter contract for 40mm grenade launchers (XM129) is being awarded to Philco-Ford Corp., Newport Beach, Calif. Award is by Weapons Command, Rock Island Arsenal, Ill.

AIR UNIVERSITY'S AIR Command and Staff College has initiated a three-pronged physical training program into the ACSC curriculum. Athletic activity will consist of mandatory calisthenics in base gym at Maxwell AFB, Ala., optional competitive sports and voluntary running exercises.

MILITARY AIRLIFT COMMAND doubled its cargo and passenger traffic during 1966, with the increase attributed to Southeast Asia operations. MAC hauled 2,260,000 passengers and 508,000 tons of cargo, the most it has ever carried during any year.

TAPS FOR HARMON AFB came during a joint American-Canadian ceremony in Newfoundland. Airfield has been used by U.S. Armed Forces since 1941, most recently as center for Strategic Air Command air refueling operations.

OFFICERS AND ENLISTED men from nearly all U.S. Army Vietnam's 20 MARS stations met at Di An to discuss the system's progress and future development. MARS, the Military Affiliate Radio System, provides trans-Pacific telephone and telegraph messages for American soldiers through military radio facilities in Vietnam and MARS member stations in the U.S.

FORMER SECRETARY TO general staff, Headquarters U.S. Army Europe, Brig. Gen. Edward M. Flanagan Jr., has been assigned as new assistant division commander, 25th Infantry Division at Cu Chi, RVN.

MARINE CORPS BOARD to select 215 officer and enlisted personnel for temporary appointment to first and second lieutenant has convened at Headquarters Marine Corps in Washington, D.C. It will select eligible active duty male warrant officers, including those temporarily appointed to officer grade during FY66/67, for first lieutenant. Permanent staff noncommissioned officers, including those selected for temporary officer grade in FY66/67, will be considered for second lieutenant.

COMMANDERS DIGEST

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Supplemental Budget Request Details Vietnam Activities

In presenting a $12.9 billion request to Congress for new obligational authority to supplement the FY 67 military budget, Defense Secretary McNamara has outlined the full range of American policy objectives and activities in Vietnam.

His statement underscored that our overall policy objective in South Vietnam is a stable and independent government free of external control and externally inspired violence.

"Our immediate objective is to influence the North Vietnamese to move the conflict from the battlefield to the conference table, or to compel them to desist in their aggression," he continued.

Mr. McNamara's statement contained a full exposition of current operations in Vietnam. It included these highlights:

- Confirmed VC strength in South Vietnam at the close of 1966 was about 275,000, of which 45,000 are regular North Vietnamese personnel.
- South Vietnam's regular force at year's end was about 320,000, with the force level going up to 730,000 counting various militias and national police force.
- American military strength at the end of 1966 broke down into 383,000 in South Vietnam, 35,000 in Thailand and 36,000 aboard off-shore ships.
- Allied military strength from five nations—but principally Republic of Korea—was 53,000 at year-end.
- The VC appeared to have lost about as many men as they were able to infiltrate from the north during the last half of 1966.
- Limiting factor on VC infiltration rate depends not on mobilization potential but on numbers of men the enemy is able to support in the south.
- About 1,000 fighters and attack aircraft, including carrier planes, are deployed in Southeast Asia, with the force level to remain essentially the same.
- Air attacks on the North have destroyed two-thirds of POL storage there.
- Navy offshore fleet will be maintained at current 90-ship level, which does not include 26 Coast Guard boats and 84 Swift boats in "Market Time" operations.
- Rate of air ordnance expended almost equals World War II peak rate and is, in fact, four times more than the peak Korean War rate.

The Defense Secretary also noted that the four military services had to increase their force levels above the original FY 67 budget to sustain operations in Vietnam and to maintain a training and rotation base. These year-end overages were given as 220,500 for the Army, 2,440 for the Marine Corps, 25,520 for the Navy and 45,240 for the Air Force.

NAVY CROSS—Maj. Vincil W. Hazelbaker, USMC (right), a helicopter pilot with Marine Observation Squadron Two, receives the Navy Cross from Gen. Wallace M. Greene Jr., Commandant of the Marine Corps, at Da Nang, Vietnam. Maj. Hazelbaker was cited for resupplying and then commanding a beleaguered Marine ground unit in August.

DOD Manpower Strength To Increase 77,484 in FY68

Total Defense Department year-end manpower strength under the FY68 budget will increase by 77,484.

Most of the manpower increase—65,800—will go to Army, with the Marine Corps registering a 14,290 manpower gain and the Navy 8,894. Manpower will go down for the Air Force. The decline comes through a 13,553 reduction in enlisted strength. The Air Force will add 3,485 officers during FY68.

DOD year-end civilian employment will register a 23,519 gain. The military departments are entirely responsible for these gains, with the Navy being credited with 12,179 of these civilian increases alone.

Budget Request Includes $814 Million For New Military Family Housing

Department of Defenses FY68 budget proposal contains a request for $814 million for construction of 12,500 new family housing units for military personnel.

Defense officials stressed that this family housing request is in addition to the 8,250 family housing units released by Defense Secretary McNamara from FY67 funds which had been withheld.

Bachelor Officer Quarters, recreational facilities, and barracks spaces for FY68 were not spelled out. By tradition they are included in the military construction bill. The FY 68 request for military construction spending amounted to $1.6 billion.

AF Announces Savings On Position Conversions From Officer to NCO

Air Force use of non-commissioned officers in positions formerly held by officers saved $2.8 million in FY66, based on conversion of more than 400 officer positions to NCO authorizations.

Cumulative conversions since the program began in 1961 now total more than 3,000 positions.

Former officer positions now filled by some NCOs include security control, unit postal, test control and sample survey. Many NCOs are also responsible for supply accounts and signing special orders; serve as welfare fund custodians; and when appropriate some represent command elements on staff visits and others serve as members of certain inspector general teams.

Navy Builds New Facility At Antarctic Station

Navy has begun work on a new scientific station facility at Palmer Station, Anvers Island, Antarctica, which will bring the temporary station to permanent status.

Palmer is 2,500 air miles from McMurdo Station and must be resupplied by ship except for occasional air drops. Construction includes a wharf for an Antarctic research vessel now being built for the U. S. Antarctic Research Program.

Work during the Antarctic summer includes preparing a site and building the wharf, a seawater intake system, fuel tanks and a fuel distribution system.

Deep Freeze icebreaker Westwind arrived Jan. 9 with scientists and members of Construction Battalion Unit 201. The CBU-201 men will start building the station proper if they can finish the other work before winter sets in.

DECORATED DOCTOR—Capt. Asa J. Wilbourn is one of the most highly decorated Air Force Flight Surgeons serving in Vietnam. He has been awarded the DFC, Airman's Medal, the Air Medal with six Oak Leaf Clusters and the Air Force Commendation Medal. During his seven months of rotational duty in Vietnam he has flown more than 70 missions. He is attached to the 8th Tactical Bomb Sq., 35th Tactical Fighter Wing, Phan Rang Air Base.

Airborne Unit Conducts Combat-Condition Training

Training under combat conditions in the "backyard" of enemy territory is being conducted by 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Infantry Division, at Phan Rang, RVN.

Each replacement arriving at brigade's base camp receives 80 hours instruction during six days and nights to improve guerrilla warfare knowledge and skills. Physical conditioning and tropical climate acclimatization are also stressed.

A combat reaction course for squad leaders and small unit training is also conducted. The squad leaders encounter a series of realistic situations demanding immediate decisions and actions. Unit training includes instruction in counterinsurgency.

Medal of Honor Awarded Posthumously To Army Lieutenant

The Medal of Honor has been awarded posthumously to Army Second Lieutenant Robert J. Hibbs for heroism in Vietnam, with an award presentation to his parents Jan. 26 at Ft. Myer, Va.

Mr. and Mrs. Walter E. Hibbs, Cedar Falls, Iowa, received the medal presented by Army Secretary Stanley R. Resor, acting for the President and in the name of Congress.

Lt. Hibbs was cited for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action in Vietnam" at the cost of his life above and beyond the call of duty.

The award recognizes Lt. Hibbs' heroism, including the ambush of a Viet Cong company, covering the withdrawal of his own patrol, attacking another Viet Cong company and rescuing a wounded member of his unit.

He charged two enemy machine gun emplacements during the rescue to cover the safe withdrawal of his men, sustaining fatal wounds.

Kansas Adopts 9th Inf.

Army's 9th Infantry Division was adopted by proclamation of the governor of Kansas within one week of public announcement that elements of the former Kansas-based outfit had landed in RVN.

Gov. William H. Avery's proclamation launched "Operation Kansas," asking citizens to donate items for 9th's pacification and people-to-people programs in RVN.

Similar adoptions include the 1st Infantry Division by Birmingham, Ala.: the 173d Airborne Brigade by Rochester, Minn.; the 23d Artillery Group by Gadsden, Ala.; the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) by Columbia, S. C.; 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division, by Baraboo, Wis.; and the 93d Evacuation Hospital by Huntsville, Ala.

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